United Nations A/C.5/56/SR.40

General Assembly
Fifty-sixth session

Official Records

Distr.: General
7 March 2002

Original: English

Fifth Committee

Summary record of the 40th meeting
Held at Headquarters, New York, on Monday, 24 December 2001, at 10 a.m.

Chairman: Mr. Effah-Apenteng ..... (Ghana)
Chairman of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions: Mr. Mselle

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The meeting was called to order at 10.35 a.m.

Agenda item 124: Pattern of conferences (*continued*)

Draft resolution A/C.5/56/L.24

1. **Mr. Schlesinger** (Austria) introduced draft resolution A/C.5/56/L.24. A number of minor changes had been made to the text. The reference to "A to E" in the first and last preambular paragraphs had been deleted and, in section I, paragraph 7, "relevant the provisions" should read instead "the relevant provisions".

2. *Draft resolution A/C.5/56/L.24, as orally revised, was adopted.*

Agenda item 130: Report of the Secretary-General on the activities of the Office of Internal Oversight Services (*continued*)

Draft resolution A/C.5/56/L.36

3. **Mr. Ahmed** (Iraq) said that his delegation was extremely concerned about the breaches referred to in document A/55/436. It was of vital importance to follow the matter up in order to ensure that financial and accounting operations were carried out in accordance with the relevant United Nations directives and resolutions. Moreover, those breaches constituted a squandering of Iraqi funds earmarked for humanitarian purposes under the memorandum of understanding with a view to alleviating the burden of the embargo on the Iraqi people. His delegation was therefore anxious that they should be referred to the Security Council for consideration and the adoption of appropriate measures to ensure the sound operation of the Office of the Iraq Programme and safeguard Iraqi assets.

4. Accordingly, his delegation was most concerned that consensus should prevail in the conduct of the Committee's work, expressed appreciation to the coordinator, who had produced a compromise solution, and endorsed the coordinator's proposal concerning the paragraphs referred to in the consensus draft resolution (A/C.5/56/L.36). His Government would, however, address a letter to the Security Council drawing its attention to the contents of document A/55/436.

5. *Draft resolution A/C.5/56/L.36 was adopted.*

Agenda item 122: Programme budget for the biennium 2000-2001 (*continued*)

Agenda item 133: Administrative and budgetary aspects of the financing of the United Nations peacekeeping operations (*continued*)

Comprehensive review of the whole question of peacekeeping operations in all their aspects (A/C.5/56/L.32)

6. **Mr. Bouheddou** (Algeria) reiterated his delegation's commitment to effective implementation of the recommendations of the Panel on United Nations Peace Operations and of the Special Committee on Peacekeeping Operations, and to strengthening the capacities of the Department of Peacekeeping Operations.

7. His delegation attached particular importance to preserving the Committee's prerogatives in the administrative and budgetary fields and to ensuring strict compliance with rule 153 of the rules of procedure of the General Assembly, and it viewed with alarm the recent attempts to deprive the Fifth Committee of certain prerogatives in favour of another Committee. His delegation would closely follow the issue in the context of discussions relating to the support account, at the resumed session of the General Assembly in May 2002 and in future reports on rapid deployment and strengthening of the United Nations Logistics Base at Brindisi.

8. *Draft resolution A/C.5/56/L.32 was adopted.*

9. **Mr. Tilemans** (Belgium), speaking on behalf of the European Union and the Central and Eastern European countries associated with the European Union, said that the Committee had adopted, virtually at the last minute, financial provisions for strengthening the Department of Peacekeeping Operations. In a spirit of consensus, the Committee had followed all but one of the recommendations of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions. The European Union had expressed clear reservations on some of the conclusions of the Advisory Committee relating to the Peacekeeping Best Practices Unit. Those views were shared by many developing and developed States, particularly the major troop contributors and States benefiting from peacekeeping operations. The problems had not been resolved and the Secretariat should present new proposals at the Assembly's resumed fifty-sixth session. The issue of public information at Headquarters

in relation to field operations, which had scarcely been mentioned during the Committee's discussions, should also be reviewed. The resumed fifty-sixth session would also provide an opportunity for the Committee to provide financing for an essential aspect of the Brahimi report, namely, the development of a rapid deployment capacity and of the strategic reserve at the United Nations Logistics Base at Brindisi.

10. The Department of Peacekeeping Operations was not in a position to carry out its restructuring and recruitment of staff to enable it to provide adequate support to field operations. That quantitative improvement would be accompanied by changes in internal management and by strengthened coordination with other departments, offices, funds and programmes.

11. **Ms. Silot Bravo** (Cuba) said that her delegation had joined the consensus on the draft resolution because of the need to strengthen the capabilities of the Department of Peacekeeping Operations. More imaginative thinking was required, however, as well as a balanced approach that took account of all the priorities of the United Nations.

Support account for peacekeeping operations (A/C.5/56/34)

12. **Mr. Yeo** Bock Cheng (Director, Peacekeeping Financing Division) introduced the note by the Secretary-General on the support account for peacekeeping operations contained in document A/C.5/56/34.

13. **The Chairman** proposed that the Committee take note of the amounts to be appropriated in respect of the five peacekeeping missions referred to in the note by the Secretary-General.

14. *It was so decided.*

Draft resolution A/C.5/56/L.30

15. *Draft resolution A/C.5/56/L.30 was adopted.*

Agenda item 123: Proposed programme budget for the biennium 2002-2003 (*continued*)

Draft decisions contained in document A/C.5/56/L.33

16. *The draft decisions contained in document A/C.5/56/L.33 were adopted.*

17. **Ms. Samayoa-Recari** (Guatemala) expressed gratitude for the support that had been given to the peace process in Guatemala.

18. **Mr. Adam** (Israel) regretted the failure of the Department of Public Information to include any provision in its budget proposals for the World Summit on Sustainable Development, as a result of which the Committee had had to approve an additional appropriation of $352,500 for the Summit.

19. **Ms. Silot Bravo** (Cuba) urged the Committee to adopt a more comprehensive approach to the question of financing certain aspects of international conferences. More time should be allocated during consideration of the budget proposals for addressing those issues and for considering the relevant recommendations of the Advisory Committee.

Revised estimates resulting from resolutions and decisions adopted by the Economic and Social Council at its substantive session of 2001 (continued)

Draft decision A/C.5/56/L.37

20. *Draft decision A/C.5/56/L.37 was adopted.*

Request for subvention to the United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research resulting from the recommendations of the Board of Trustees of the Institute contained in the report of the Board (continued)

Draft decision A/C.5/56/L.39

21. *Draft decision A/C.5/56/L.39 was adopted.*

International Trade Centre UNCTAD/WTO (continued)

Draft decision A/C.5/56/L.38

22. *Draft decision A/C.5/56/L.38 was adopted.*

Inter-organizational security measures: implementation of section II of General Assembly resolution 55/238 of 23 December 2000 entitled "Safety and security of United Nations personnel" (continued)

Draft resolution A/C.5/56/L.31

23. **Ms. Silot Bravo** (Cuba), coordinator of the informal consultations on the item, introduced draft resolution A/C.5/56/L.31 on behalf of the Chairman.

24. *Draft resolution A/C.5/56/L.31 was adopted.*

25. **Mr. Nakkari** (Syrian Arab Republic) said that, in submitting future proposals to the Committee, the Secretariat should take into account the provisions of the relevant resolution of the General Assembly.

26. **Mr. Bouheddou** (Algeria) welcomed the consensus that had been reached on such an important resolution.

Contingency fund: consolidated statement of programme budget implications and revised estimates (A/C.5/56/33)

27. **Mr. Sach** (Director, Programme Planning and Budget Division) introduced the report of the Secretary-General on the contingency fund: consolidated statement of programme budget implications and revised estimates contained in document A/C.5/56/33. The consolidated amount of $16,707,900 was within the available balance of the contingency fund. An uncommitted balance of $2,192,100 would remain in the fund.

28. **Mr. Mselle** (Chairman of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions) orally presented the Advisory Committee's observations on the report of the Secretary-General (A/C.5/56/33). The Advisory Committee recommended that the Fifth Committee should proceed along the lines indicated in paragraphs 2 and 3 of the Secretary-General's report.

29. **The Chairman** proposed that, without prejudice to rule 78 of the rules of procedure of the General Assembly, the Fifth Committee should recommend that the General Assembly note that a balance of $2,192,100 remained in the contingency fund.

30. *It was so decided.*

31. **Ms. Silot Bravo** (Cuba) said that all relevant organs should be notified that an uncommitted balance, to which they could have recourse in the future, remained in the contingency fund.

Utilization of the provision for special political missions under section 3, Political affairs (A/C.5/56/32)

32. **Mr. Sach** (Director, Programme Planning and Budget Division) introduced the note by the Secretary-General on utilization of the provision for special political missions under section 3, Political affairs, contained in document A/C.5/56/32. The General Assembly was requested to approve a charge of $33,690,300 against the provision for special political missions, leaving an unallocated balance of some $64.5 million.

33. **Mr. Mselle** (Chairman of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions), orally introducing the related report of the Advisory Committee, recalled that, in its reports on estimates in respect of matters of which the Security Council was seized (A/56/7/Add.5-7), the Advisory Committee had recommended a partial charge, pending the submission of a comprehensive report to the Assembly at its resumed fifty-sixth session. It would therefore be appropriate for the Fifth Committee to recommend that the General Assembly approve a charge of $33,690,300 against the provision for special political missions, as indicated in paragraph 4 of the note by the Secretary-General (A/C.5/56/32).

34. **The Chairman** proposed that, without prejudice to rule 78 of the rules of procedure of the General Assembly, the Fifth Committee should recommend that the General Assembly approve a charge of $33,690,300 against the provision for special political missions.

35. *It was so decided.*

Questions relating to the proposed programme budget for the biennium 2002-2003 (continued)

Draft resolution A/C.5/56/L.29

36. **Mr. Tilemans** (Belgium), speaking on behalf of the European Union and associated countries, drew attention to discrepancies between the French and English versions of paragraph 49 of the draft resolution, where, in the English text, the Assembly would note "with concern the current and projected potential decreasing trend in extrabudgetary resources". The French rendering should be brought into line with the English text.

37. Also, under part VI of the draft text (Human rights and humanitarian affairs), the content of paragraph 125 did not reflect what had been agreed upon in the "informal informal" consultations, which was that the title of subprogramme 1 should be reproduced in full in the paragraph. The European Union would like to see the appropriate correction made. Furthermore, on realigning the narrative section of section 22 (Human rights), the facilitator had distributed a note that reflected the negotiations on the

matter, but which was not reflected in the annex containing changes to the programme narratives of the proposed programme budget.

38. Lastly, paragraph 74 (f) of the French text contained elements ("*sont connus*") that were not present in the English text. While the European Union had no difficulty with the inclusion of the words "*sont connus*", which in fact added greater clarity to the text, the French version should be brought into line with the English text.

39. **Mr. Mirmohammad** (Islamic Republic of Iran) agreed with the representative of Belgium that the content of paragraph 125 should reflect what had been agreed upon in the "informal informal" consultations. In addition, the entire content of section 22 (Human rights) of the annex to the draft resolution should be replaced by the final version of the changes to the narrative, the text of which had earlier been circulated to members of the Committee. Lastly, the blank space in paragraph 152 should be filled.

40. **Mr. Schlesinger** (Austria), supported by **Mr. Bouheddou** (Algeria), recalled that it had been agreed in the informal consultations to delete the words "as he sees appropriate" in paragraph 103 of the draft text.

41. **Mr. Ekorong A Dong** (Cameroon) said that the reference to West Africa in paragraph 131 should be deleted. In paragraph 150, the English version should be brought into line with the original French text.

42. **Mr. Kelapile** (Botswana) drew attention to paragraphs 107 and 108, in which the vacancy rate indicated of no more than 5 per cent was at variance with the vacancy rate of 6.5 per cent for Professionals and 3.1 per cent for General Service staff indicated in V (g) of section 16 of the Committee's draft report (A/C.5/56/L.28 (Part I)). The wording "provision of resources therefore" in paragraph 113 was also at variance with the wording used by the Advisory Committee in paragraph V.20 of its first report on the proposed programme budget for the biennium 2002-2003 (A/56/7). The Advisory Committee had used the words "provision of resources therefor".

43. **Mr. Nakkari** (Syrian Arab Republic) asked whether the number of the session of the General Assembly, which had been left blank in paragraph 152, had not been agreed upon in the informal consultations.

44. **Mr. Ivashchenko** (Ukraine) agreed with the representative of the Islamic Republic of Iran that the narrative part of section 22 of the draft resolution should be replaced by the text containing the changes to the narrative agreed upon in the "informal informal" consultations, which had been circulated to members of the Committee.

45. **Ms. Silot Bravo** (Cuba) said that the comma should be deleted after the word "activities" in paragraph 48 of the English text.

46. **The Chairman** said that all oral corrections would be incorporated into the final version of the draft text.

47. **Mr. Mselle** (Chairman of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions), replying to the question raised by the representative of Botswana, said that the wording used by the Advisory Committee in paragraph V.20 of its first report on the proposed programme budget for the biennium 2002-2003 (A/56/7) was "the provision of resources therefor". The same wording would thus be appropriate for paragraph 113 of the draft text.

48. **Mr. Sach** (Director, Programme Planning and Budget Division), replying to the question raised by the delegation of Botswana, said that the vacancy rate of 6.5 per cent for Professionals and 3.1 per cent for General Service indicated under section 16 of the Committee's draft report (A/C.5/56/L.28 (Part I)) reflected an adjustment that applied to the Regional Commissions Liaison Office at Headquarters. No other adjustments had been made for vacancies at the regional commission for Africa.

49. *Draft resolution A/C.5/56/L.29, as orally revised, was adopted.*

50. **Mr. Tilemans** (Belgium), speaking on behalf of the European Union and the Central and Eastern European countries that associated themselves with the statement, said that, in approving the proposed programme budget, the Committee had made available resources for implementing the agreed objectives, mandates and programmes while at the same time cutting some $75 million from the amount proposed by the Secretary-General, thus demonstrating its continued commitment to budgetary discipline and the optimum utilization of resources. The European Union was very pleased with the result.

51. Equally important was the fact that the resolution on the budget endorsed a thorough review of the Organization's information and publications policies. The Union expected the Department of Public

Information to play a leading role in those areas and to submit by the appointed time, in coordination with the managers of other departments and agencies, the requested reviews and proposals for reform. The draft resolution also contained a reference to the issue of sunset clauses. The adoption of results-based budgeting should eventually lead to a revitalization of the debate on that issue and on the timetables for the programmes and activities of the Organization. That debate should be conducted in the appropriate forum. The European Union was pleased that paragraph 30 of the draft resolution stated clearly the Committee's wish that the Secretary-General implement regulation 5.6 of the Regulations and Rules Governing Programme Planning, the Programme Aspects of the Budget, the Monitoring of Implementation and the Methods of Evaluation as rigorously as possible.

52. It was also pleased that the Committee had agreed to the Professional posts proposed for the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR), the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA), the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA), the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), the United Nations Centre for Human Settlements (Habitat), sustainable development, the fight against terrorism, drugs and crime and the International Court of Justice. The decision not to grant all the reclassifications requested, while in some ways regrettable, should be taken as a sign of Member States' unease regarding the practices followed thus far on the matter.

53. The Union considered the establishment of an Office of the High Representative for the Least Developed Countries, Landlocked Developing Countries and Small Island Developing States to be a matter of priority. It hoped that the High Representative would be appointed promptly and that the Office would be provided with all appropriate resources, inter alia, through the redeployment of staff and resources from other departments. The Advisory Committee's recommendations regarding a report on the impact of such redeployment should not prevent the prompt establishment of all elements of the new structure.

54. **Mr. Mirmohammad** (Islamic Republic of Iran), speaking on behalf of the Group of 77 and China, expressed appreciation for the flexibility demonstrated by the various delegations. The Group had been flexible, too, and had accepted a number of significant reductions in the resources requested, to the extent that they did not affect mandates and priorities agreed upon by all Member States. It had sought to avoid reducing resources for specific departments when the implications of such reductions were not clear and had tried to exempt the Department of Economic and Social Affairs and the regional commissions from some across-the-board reductions. It was concerned about the impact that the redeployment of resources from section 11A would have on the capacity of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) to fulfil its mandate in respect of the least developed, landlocked developing and small island developing countries and looked forward to receiving the report on the consequences of such redeployment. It supported the establishment of the Office of the High Representative but felt that that should not affect the operational capacities of UNCTAD.

55. The Group had also sought to emphasize the need to deal with programme budget implications in accordance with the provisions of General Assembly resolution 41/213 and rule 153 of the rules of procedure of the General Assembly. It had proposed the establishment of a post of ombudsman in the Office of the Secretary-General with authority in the area of the administration of justice and hoped that the position would be filled expeditiously by a competent individual with the necessary legal qualifications.

56. **Mr. Jalang'o** (Kenya) welcomed the steps taken by the Secretary-General to strengthen conference-servicing facilities at the United Nations Office at Nairobi. During the current period, the utilization factor of such services in Nairobi had exceeded those of the Offices at Vienna and Geneva, thus confirming that Nairobi could be a viable venue for important meetings. He hoped that the remaining vacancies for Arabic and English interpreters would be filled expeditiously.

57. While there had been a modest increase in regular budget funding for UNEP and Habitat, the overall level was still far short of what was required. He appealed to the Secretary-General to make every effort to significantly increase the regular budget funding for the two bodies.

58. **Ms. Silot Bravo** (Cuba) said that her delegation had joined in the consensus on the understanding that the level of resources approved would be sufficient to fulfil all the mandates and that, if that proved not to be so, the Committee could take steps to provide the Secretariat with the necessary resources.

59. Regarding the paragraphs of the resolution which called for revisions in some Departments, her delegation had joined the consensus on the understanding that the revisions would be administrative in nature and would be designed to enhance efficiency. Any substantive revisions would require the direct participation of the substantive organs of the Departments concerned.

60. Her delegation had joined the consensus on paragraph 30, on the understanding that any decision on the sunset clauses was a matter for the General Assembly, which had already decided not to take action on the matter, and that regulation 5.6 of the Regulations and Rules Governing Programme Planning would be implemented within the context of the budget. It would have serious reservations about any proposal that went beyond that context.

61. **Mr. Nakkari** (Syrian Arab Republic) welcomed the additional posts which had been approved even though they had not been part of the Secretary-General's original proposal. The five additional posts for UNRWA reflected the international community's increased appreciation of the difficulties faced by the Palestinian refugees. He hoped that the report referred to in the last line of paragraph 124 would not contain a suggestion to the effect that documents in Arabic be issued in summary form, for it was clear that what was being requested was that all publications should be issued in full in Arabic as well.

62. **Mr. Chandra** (India) expressed satisfaction at the fact that the budget appropriations had been approved by consensus and noted that the Group of 77 and China had approached the negotiations with clarity of purpose regarding the need to provide all mandated programmes with appropriate funds, to adhere to the provisions of the Charter and of resolutions 41/213 and 42/211 and to adhere to the Regulations and Rules Governing Programme Planning. His delegation had therefore been pleased to see that the Secretary-General had been requested to implement regulation 5.6 of those Regulations and Rules. He wished to place on record his appreciation for the positive approach taken by representatives of Australia, Canada, the European Union, Japan, New Zealand and the United States. His delegation hoped that the $75 million reduction in appropriations would not lead to mandated programmes remaining unimplemented or being inadequately implemented. He expressed disappointment that some very deserving reclassifications could not be approved and that the decision on the matter had been taken, by some, in an arbitrary manner on the basis of considerations regarding expediency and, by others, on the basis of considerations that were not entirely objective.

Draft report of the Fifth Committee
(A/C.5/56/L.28 (Parts I and II))

63. **The Chairman** drew attention to the draft report and invited the Committee to take a decision on the recommendations contained in Part II.

64. **Mr. Sach** (Director, Programme Planning and Budget Division) drew attention to a number of editorial changes in the draft report.

65. **Mr. Nakkari** (Syrian Arab Republic) wondered whether the Advisory Committee and the Programme Planning and Budget Division had consulted one another to make sure that all the proposals had been taken into account.

66. **Mr. Mselle** (Chairman of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions) noted that the Committee's decisions would be reflected in its report to the plenary Assembly. In implementing the budget, the Secretary-General would be guided by the recommendations of the Advisory Committee and the additional recommendations of the Fifth Committee. He assumed that, at the end of the meeting, the Secretariat would make sure that the document reflected what had happened in the Committee.

67. **Mr. Sach** (Director, Programme Planning and Budget Division) confirmed that the Secretariat would indeed go over the figures and cross-check everything.

Draft resolution II

68. *Draft resolution II, as orally revised, was adopted.*

Draft resolution III

69. *Draft resolution III was adopted.*

Draft resolution IV

70. *Draft resolution IV was adopted.*

Draft resolution V

71. *Draft resolution V, as orally revised, was adopted.*

Agenda item 121: Review of the efficiency of the administrative and financial functioning of the United Nations (*continued*) (A/C.5/56/L.34 and A/C.5/56/L.35)

Biennial programme of work of the Fifth Committee for 2002-2003 (A/C.5/56/L.34)

Draft decision A/C.5/56/L.34

72. *Draft decision A/C.5/56/L.34 was adopted.*

Action taken on certain items (A/C.5/56/L.35)

Draft decision A/C.5/56/L.35

73. **The Chairman** introduced draft decision A/C.5/56/L.35 and informed the Committee that the first part of the resumed fifty-sixth session of the General Assembly would be held from 4 to 15 March 2002 and the second part from 6 to 31 May 2002.

74. **Mr. Nakkari** (Syrian Arab Republic) said that, while his delegation welcomed the fact that the resumed session had been shortened, it would have to be extended if developments warranted, and it should be understood that the adoption of the draft decision was subject to the proviso that flexibility would be shown.

75. *Draft decision A/C.5/56/L.35 was adopted.*

Closure of the work of the Fifth Committee during the main part of the fifty-sixth session of the General Assembly

76. After an exchange of courtesies, in which **Mr. Herrera** (Mexico), on behalf of the Latin American and Caribbean Group, **Mr. Pelšs** (Latvia), on behalf of the Group of Eastern European States, **Ms. Dinić** (Croatia) and **Mr. Mirmohammad** (Islamic Republic of Iran) took part, **the Chairman** declared that the Fifth Committee had completed its work for the main part of the fifty-sixth session of the General Assembly.

The meeting rose at 1.10 p.m.